

**MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF
THE TORRANCE TRAFFIC COMMISSION**

1. **CALL TO ORDER**

The Torrance Traffic Commission convened in a regular meeting at 7:02 p.m. on Monday, December 5, 2005 in the West Annex Meeting Room at Torrance City Hall.

2. **SALUTE TO THE FLAG**

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Commissioner Santome.

3. **ROLL CALL**

Present: Commissioners Lee, Rische, Santome, Tsao, Ulrich, and
Chairperson Lewis.

Absent: None.

Also Present: Transportation Manager Semaan,
Project Manager Sedadi,
Planning Assistant Suree, and
Torrance Police Department Lieutenant Matsuda.

4. **AFFIDAVIT OF POSTING**

MOTION: Commissioner Santome moved to accept and file the report of the City Clerk on the posting of the agenda for this meeting. Commissioner Rische seconded the motion; a voice vote reflected unanimous approval.

5. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

5a. **MINUTES OF JULY 14, 2005**

MOTION: Commissioner Ulrich moved for the approval of the July 14, 2005 Traffic Commission meeting minutes as submitted. Commissioner Rische seconded the motion.

5b. **MINUTES OF OCTOBER 3, 2005**

MOTION: Commissioner Santome moved to approve the October 3, 2005 Traffic Commission meeting minutes as submitted. Commissioner Ulrich seconded the motion.

5c. **MINUTES OF NOVEMBER 7, 2005**

MOTION: Commissioner Santome, seconded by Commissioner Ulrich, moved to approve the November 7, 2005 Traffic Commission meeting minutes as submitted.

A roll call vote reflected unanimous approval of the Traffic Commission minutes of July 14, 2005, October 3, 2005, and November 7, 2005 as submitted.

6. **ITEMS UNDER CONSIDERATION**

6A. **TRAFFIC IMPACT REPORT / STUDY – METHODOLOGY AND ANALYSIS**

Transportation Manager Semaan introduced the item and noted that reference material, traffic impact reports for prior development projects, and trip generation handbooks were available for review following presentation of the item.

Planning Assistant Suree reported on the analytical process and methodologies included in the material of record that are used to evaluate traffic impacts on the roadway system by a proposed development project. He stated that the Los Angeles County is concerned with the overall growth of the regional transportation system and has created a Congestion Management Program (CMP). The goal of this state-mandated program is to reduce the overall number of trips by increasing physical capacity, implementing lower cost transportation system management (TSM) projects, or to make more efficient use of the existing facilities through the Transportation Demand Management (TDM). He stated that a set of guidelines and standards, monitoring system, and conformance procedures have been established for all of the jurisdictions within the region to follow.

Transportation Manager Semaan noted that this item was brought forward voluntarily by staff to provide Commissioners and residents the opportunity to ask questions about how criteria and thresholds of significance that staff uses as a guideline are developed.

Commissioner Lee expressed concern that the Planning Commission issues Conditional Use Permits for developments without consulting with the Traffic Commission first. He stated that the Traffic Commission should be able to voice concerns about potential traffic problems before a project is approved.

Transportation Manager Semaan stated that tonight's presentation was primarily on methodology and to clarify how a Traffic Impact Report is conducted. He advised that the governing body that approves Conditional Use Permits is the Planning Commission and that staff is available to provide them with comments, feedback, and to address concerns. He stated that it was the purview of the Planning Commission to bring an item to the Traffic Commission for consideration before making a decision on it.

Responding to Commissioner Tsao's inquiry regarding Table 1, page 4, Transportation Manager Semaan explained Level of Services (LOS) ranges A to F where LOS A indicates a free flow of traffic while LOS F indicates extreme traffic congestion.

Commissioner Ulrich received clarification that LOS D was an exceptional flow in terms of operations at a specific intersection and that it is a comparison of the volume over the capacity at each individual intersection.

When Chairperson Lewis suggested that the methodology used be put on the City's web site, Transportation Manager Semaan advised that much of the information was available on the Department's web page.

Transportation Manager Semaan discussed cumulative impact, noting that an individual project could not be unduly taxed or penalized due to cumulative developments in an area. He stated that the City tries to make circulation enhancements when there is an opportunity to help the traffic circulation in and around the area. He stated that the purpose of the Citywide Traffic Study was to better understand existing and future traffic flow from a City perspective and that cumulative impact of approved projects as well as growth of surrounding communities are evaluated before making recommendations. He discussed the adoption of the Development Impact Fee that will be used to make circulation improvements.

Commissioner Ulrich noted that residents are impacted by the totality of developments, and questioned if the impact of three individual developments in one area would total what the impact of the three together would mean in the long range.

Transportation Manager Semaan advised that it would depend on the traffic flow patterns that they generated. He stated that the Traffic Impact Report for an individual project has to be looked at on the merits of that individual project and that the Citywide Traffic Study would make an overall evaluation of the City's infrastructure for development occurring within the City and surrounding communities.

Commissioner Santome expressed frustration that fellow citizens looked to the Traffic Commission as their watchdog and that he felt it was out of their control. When he questioned if any developments have been denied by City Council due to potential traffic problems, Transportation Manager Semaan stated that he was not aware of any.

Transportation Manager Semaan stated that the primary reason this item was brought forward was to go through the process of how projects are evaluated through a Traffic Impact Report.

Commissioner Rische noted that a proposed development of 2,300 residential units in the Palos Verdes/Lomita area and installation of storm drains on Palos Verdes Drive North would impact traffic in the City.

Transportation Manager Semaan stated that the storm drain installation would be short term, but that the residential development would be taken into consideration in the Citywide Traffic Study. He explained that the study looks at a ten to twenty year projection from today, identifies improvements that are needed, and that possible mitigation measures are rechannelization of an intersection or a change in signal timing. He stated that if a nearby community alters their circulation patterns, the City can provide input when solicited or take legal action.

At 7:37 p.m., Chairperson Lewis welcomed comments from the public.

Arthur Evans, Arvada Street, suggested that it was the State's responsibility to maintain Hawthorne Boulevard, Pacific Coast Highway, and Western Avenue. He stressed the need for better public transportation and coordination with other cities. He

proposed that the Green Line be moved to Crenshaw Boulevard and 208th Street with a station at Del Amo Boulevard and Madrona Avenue.

Gladys Meade, Paseo del Gracia, Redondo Beach, representing the League of Women Voters of Torrance, stated that residents and Commissioners needed more time to thoroughly assess the data presented in both reports. She stated that informational meetings throughout the City needed to be scheduled and that analysis and interpretation of the raw data should be provided. She stated that the information presented in both reports does not appear to be differentiated or integrated in projecting data for future developments or providing a baseline or guideline for future planning in the City. She noted the lack of public transportation options in the reports.

Transportation Manager Semaan noted that the item under consideration was 6A, the staff report on the traffic impact report/study methodology. He stated that there would be several meetings devoted to Circulation Element of the General Plan Update with the Traffic and Planning Commissions before City Council consideration.

Kevin Mackintosh, Tomlee Avenue, received clarification that the traffic impact study looks at the volume to capacity ratio within an individual intersection and not how intersections work together. He explained that other methods are addressed in the Citywide Traffic Study through a traffic model to determine the most feasible operation at that particular intersection.

At Mr. Mackintosh's request, he provided additional information about the Development Impact Fee, noting that it was a one-time fee collected at the onset of a development. He clarified that the City cannot collect the monthly cost of a signal operation if it is on a public street, even if a development necessitated its installation.

Irene Griffith, 229th Street, stated that drivers exiting the 405 freeway at the Western Avenue and Crenshaw Boulevard exits are often confused about which direction to travel and tie up traffic. She recommended the installation of a transit center to improve bus usage and public campaigns to praise pedestrians as well as courtesy and respect for drivers.

The Commission was in recess from 8:08 p.m. to 8:25 p.m.

6B. **GENERAL PLAN UPDATE – CIRCULATION ELEMENT**

Transportation Manager Semaan introduced the item, noting that tonight's discussion was the beginning steps in the process of updating the traffic circulation component of the Circulation Element and the Citywide Traffic Study. He stated that the Citywide Traffic Study would build the foundation of how traffic circulation would be addressed and what will be occurring with traffic flows currently and in the future. He stated that it was a two-part document, with one component being technical data and the other a planning model that looks at circulation patterns within the City and surrounding cities. He advised that it would be one year before completion of both the Citywide Traffic Study and the General Plan update. He welcomed input, feedback, or redirection on how to improve or change the traffic circulation component as the process moves forward.

Project Manager Sedadi distributed copies of the current Circulation Element of the General Plan, noting that it was written in 1993. She stated that the goal this evening was to solicit ideas and solutions from Commissioners and residents. She introduced Paul Martin and Bob Matson from RBF Consulting who are preparing the Citywide Traffic Study and who would be listing comments at this meeting.

She reported that the four main components of the Circulation Element are: 1) Goals, Objectives and Policies; 2) The Transportation Plan; 3) Related Transportation Issues; and 4) Infrastructure Plan. She advised that 4) Infrastructure Plan would not be discussed at this meeting and that the next meeting to offer additional comments would be on February 6, 2006. She read the current goal of the Circulation Element and requested that Commissioners and the public review and provide input on the statement.

Transportation Manager Semaan noted that attachments to the item were background information consisting of collected data from Citywide traffic counts in 1999 and 2005. He stated that without this background information it was difficult to make projections and recommendations for the future.

In response to Commissioner Rische's inquiry, Transportation Manager Semaan explained possible reasons for changes in collected data in level of service in 1999 Intersection Level of Service (Attachment A), 2005 Intersection Level of Service (Attachment B), and Change in LOS Operations from 1999 to 2005 (Attachment C). He stated that some of the intersections have undergone improvements to mitigate an unacceptable level of service and in other cases there has been a change in traffic flow patterns.

When Commissioner Tsao questioned why the data reflected a degeneration of level of service at Anza Avenue and Sepulveda Boulevard, Transportation Manager Semaan explained that the overall ADT volumes may have decreased but the volume that is entering that intersection during peak hours may have increased.

Chairperson Lewis noted the 201.2% ADT increase at Victor Street and 107.2% ADT increase at 223rd Street from 1999 to 2005 (Attachment E). Transportation Manager Semaan stated that some changes in traffic patterns are hard to understand but that the overall volumes may not have changed. He described the data collection process, noting that this was strictly a numerical comparison of volumes, not an analysis of each intersection. He requested that Commissioners provide statements on the first component of Circulation Element rather than look at the raw data that was collected.

Commissioner Ulrich, with concurrence from Commissioners Santome and Lee, recommended no change to the current Goal of the General Plan.

Commissioners and members from the audience made suggestions and comments on Objectives of the first component that were listed as follows:

- *Bike lanes included in transportation resources. Also electric carts / electric vehicles*
- *Land Use Element vs. Land Use Plan consistency- Objective 1.0*
- *Address cut-through traffic – Objective 2.0*
- *On-street parking enforcement – Policy 2.4*

- *Program 1.1.1 - Emphasize importance*
- *Include alleys in goals, objectives and policies*
- *Include education outreach*
 - *student / new drivers – drop off coordination*
 - *vicinity of schools behavior*
- *Include large vehicles*
- *Include traffic calming / speed humps*
- *Program 1.7.2 – Link with Crenshaw Boulevard*
- *Status update? Policy 3.5*
- *Coordinate transit with Torrance Unified School District and student transportation*
- *Add policy to add City provided off-street parking*
- *Objective 5 – Bike to work, Rideshare*
- *Objective 6 – Enhance objective for pedestrians*
 - 6.1 – *Coordinate grants for safety*
- *7.2.2 – Add visibility to landscaping maintenance*
- *9.1.2 – Grants for commercial vehicles*
- *10.1.1 – Bike racks details / enhancements*
- *3.3.2 – Bus / transit center*
- *3.0 – smaller buses*
- *7.0 – Improve Hawthorne Boulevard landscaping*
- *6.0 – Sidewalk survey needed*
- *Improve freeway ramps for vehicles*
- *ID truck routes*
- *Add bike lanes*
- *Reorganize policies*
- *Policy addressing motorized vehicles*
- *Sidewalk bump limits*
- *Location of pedestrian curb ramps*
- *Tree droppings*

Arthur Evans, Arvada Street, received clarification that projects to widen the intersection of Sepulveda and Hawthorne Boulevards as well as Anza and Inglewood Avenues have been funded and are moving forward as circulation enhancements.

Irene Griffith, 229th Street, suggested that noise levels be addressed in the Objectives. Transportation Manager Semaan explained that noise was addressed in the General Plan but was not part of the Circulation Element.

Transportation Manager Semaan advised that the information received at this meeting would be summarized and brought back to the February 6, 2006 Traffic Commission meeting.

7. **ORALS**

Transportation Manager Semaan stated that curve warning signs have been installed at Tomlee Avenue and Konya Drive.

Commissioner Ulrich suggested that a reflective center line if at all possible would provide more safety in that area.

Transportation Manager Semaan informed Commissioners that the RV/oversized vehicle item would be going to City Council in mid-January 2006.

Commissioner Santome thanked staff for their hard work and informed the audience that there would be two potential vacancies on the Traffic Commission in mid-January 2006.

8. **ADJOURNMENT**

At 10.05 p.m., Chairperson Lewis adjourned the meeting to February 6, 2006 at 7:00 p.m. in the West Annex meeting room at Torrance City Hall.

Approved as Submitted February 6, 2006 s/ Sue Herbers, City Clerk
